



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

**Testimony Concerning HB 477**  
**“Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Center - Adult to Child Ratios –**  
**Alterations”**  
**Submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee**  
**February 3, 2025**

**Position: Unfavorable** The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC) **opposes HB 477**, which would **increase** the number of children under the age of 2, considered infants, from two infants to 5 infants, under age 2 years, with only one adult, in a group of eight children. This bill would allow 1 adult to 4 children under the age of 1 year and 5 children at least 1 year and under the age of two, altering the current ratios of 1 adult to two infants under age 2 years within a group size of eight children in a family child care home. For Large Family Child Care Homes with an allowed group size of 12, the ratios and number of children under two may not be limited in a way that is more stringent than Family Child Care Homes for the numbers of children allowed under age 2 years.

MDAEYC is a professional association of 1,700 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood education practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

As an organization whose members – early childhood educators – include family child care providers, MDAEYC understands and appreciates the rationale behind HB 477. While MDAEYC agrees with the Bill’s sponsors and supporters that there is great unmet demand for infant child care in Maryland, we do not support this increased adult – infant ratio. However, we have discussed possibly **adding one additional child under 2 years who is over 18 months**, which would be a ratio of 1 adult to 3 children, if other safety conditions that would support the health and safety of all the children in the group of 8 children or 12 children in a Large Family Child Care Home.

This Maryland child care licensing standard requiring that only two infants – defined as under age two – be in a family child care home with one adult is in place to ensure that basic health and safety needs of the infants and children in care are met. Infants – up to age two – require more intensive adult attention for their healthy development. Babies learn and grow in the environment of relationships with caring adults.<sup>1</sup> Most critically, infant safety is protected by this requirement: it helps to keep infants safe in case of emergencies when an adult needs to carry them, such as a building fire. Upholding these health and safety requirements embedded in our licensing standards is essential for infants’ well-being in child care homes.

For these reasons, MDAEYC respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB 477 1403 . If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, PhD. Program Coordinator, at [stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org](mailto:stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org) or 240-441-3280.

1 National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004). Young Children Develop in an Environment of

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